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Letter dated 24 May 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing to inform you that Australia received a formal written request on 24 May from the three leaders of Timor-Leste: the President, the Prime Minister and the President of the National Parliament, asking us to provide police/military assistance to support its defence and security forces to re-establish and maintain public order in response to recent serious security incidents in Dili and elsewhere. I understand the Governments of Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal have received similar requests and we are consulting with them.

As a long-term friend and supporter of Timor-Leste, including through the United Nations, Australia is giving serious consideration to the issues raised by the Government, with work being undertaken to identify how Australia might best assist. This will include sending a team of senior officials to Timor-Leste on 25 May to discuss the terms and nature of any deployment. Consistent with Article 54 of the Charter of the United Nations, Australia will keep you, as President of the Security Council, informed of our response to the request of Timor-Leste's leaders, including if and when a formal decision has been taken by Australia to assist.

For the time being, however, Australia considers there would be value in the Security Council giving urgent consideration to the serious situation which has developed in Timor-Leste, including acknowledging Timor-Leste's request for assistance and providing appropriate support to those countries which respond positively to that request. I have written in similar terms to the Secretary-General. I would be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Robert **Hill**

06-36441 (E) 260506